

REMARKS

This application has been carefully reviewed in light of the Final Office Action dated January 19, 2006. Claims 1-22 remain pending in this application. Claims 1-9 and 12-20 have been rejected. Claims 10, 11, 21, and 22 have been objected to. Claims 1 and 12 are the independent claims. Claims 1, 9, 11, 12, 20, and 22 have been amended but no new matter has been added. Claims 7, 8, 10, 15, 16, 18, 19, and 22 have been cancelled. Favorable reconsideration is respectfully requested.

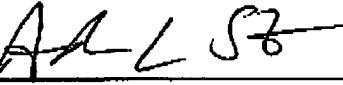
On the merits, the Office Action rejected Claims 1-5, 7-9, 12-14, and 17-20 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Trontelj (U.S. Patent No. 6,208,235; hereinafter "Trontelj"). The Office Action rejected Claims 7, 15, and 16 under 35 U.S.C. §112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description requirement. The Office Action also rejected Claims 9 and 20 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Trontelj in view of Burkhardt et al. (U.S. Patent No. 3,951,230; hereinafter "Burkhardt"). Claims 10, 11, 21, and 22 have been objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Applicant has amended Claim 1 to include the limitation of Claim 10, amended Claim 12 to include the limitation of Claim 21, and cancelled Claims 7, 15, and 16. Applicant believes that the application has now been placed in a position for allowance.

Claims 2-6, 9, and 11 depend from independent Claim 1 and Claims 13, 14, 17, 20, and 22 depend from independent Claim 12 and are believed patentable for at least the same reasons. Applicant further believes the §102 and §112 rejections of Claims 1-9 and 12-20 to be moot in light of the above remarks and request their withdrawal.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicant respectfully submits that the currently pending claims are clearly patentably distinguishable over the cited and applied references. Accordingly, entry of this amendment, reconsideration of the rejections of the claims over the references cited, and allowance of this application is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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